
SENATE BILL 6276

State of Washington 60th Legislature 2008 Regular Session

By Senators Kohl-Welles, Swecker, McAuliffe, Regala, Schoesler, Murray, Shin, Eide, Kauffman, Sheldon, Rasmussen, Kline, and McDermott

Read first time 01/14/08. Referred to Committee on Human Services & Corrections.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a domestic violence pilot program to
2 collocate a domestic violence advocate in department of social and
3 health services offices; adding a new section to chapter 74.13 RCW; and
4 providing an expiration date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW
7 to read as follows:

8 (1) By January 2009, the department of social and health services
9 shall create a pilot program to place a full-time domestic violence
10 advocate in a minimum of two division of children and family services
11 offices. In selecting the offices to participate in the program, the
12 secretary shall site one in a county with a population of at least one
13 million and the other in a county with a population of less than one
14 hundred thousand.

15 (2) The purpose of the program is to provide domestic violence
16 safety planning, advocacy, information, and support to adult victims of
17 domestic violence who are receiving services from the division of
18 children and family services offices, and to increase the capacity of

1 division of children and family services workers to identify and
2 respond effectively to domestic violence in their caseloads.

3 (3) The goals of the program are to:

4 (a) Increase the safety of children and adult victims of domestic
5 violence who are involved with the department's child protective
6 services division;

7 (b) Increase the adult domestic violence victim's understanding of
8 available domestic violence resources and supports;

9 (c) Increase the adult domestic violence victim's and the domestic
10 violence perpetrator's understanding of the effects of domestic
11 violence on children;

12 (d) Provide consultation and training to child protective services
13 social workers so that they may increase their knowledge of domestic
14 violence and practice skills for addressing domestic violence in their
15 caseloads, and provide safe, effective responses for children and their
16 families experiencing domestic violence;

17 (e) Decrease the rate at which victims of domestic violence are
18 referred back to the division of children and family services;

19 (f) Decrease the number of children of domestic violence victims
20 that are placed in protective custody;

21 (g) Improve the ability of division of children and family services
22 social workers to accurately identify the full spectrum of abusive and
23 coercive tactics that are utilized by domestic violence perpetrators,
24 and their impact on children's safety and well-being, as well as the
25 way they disrupt or undermine the parenting practices of adult victims
26 of domestic violence;

27 (h) Improve the ability of the division of children and family
28 services social worker to identify the range of strategies employed by
29 adult domestic violence victims to support the safety and well-being of
30 their children;

31 (i) Increase the strategies available to division of children and
32 family services social workers to hold the domestic violence
33 perpetrator accountable for abusive and coercive behavior and its
34 adverse impact on children;

35 (j) Increase the ability of division of children and family
36 services social workers to accurately identify the domestic violence
37 perpetrator as the person responsible for the adverse impact of
38 domestic violence on children;

1 (k) Strengthen collaborations between department staff and
2 community providers and resources; and

3 (l) Conduct an evaluation of the program by comparing the outcomes
4 of the program offices to the outcomes of the two offices that do not
5 have the domestic violence advocate, and to develop a report of the
6 findings and recommendations that may be used to replicate the program
7 statewide.

8 (4) The department shall convene advisory groups at the program
9 sites to provide advice on the implementation and progress of the pilot
10 program. The advisory groups shall include representatives from a
11 local domestic violence agency, public health, domestic violence
12 perpetrator's treatment program, protection order programs, law
13 enforcement, and others who are appropriate for the advisory group.

14 (5) The department shall utilize a request for proposal process and
15 shall select the pilot sites by September 2008. The request for
16 proposal shall require:

17 (a) The community-based domestic violence agency to have experience
18 providing domestic violence shelter or advocacy services under chapter
19 70.123 RCW, and experience working with families involved with child
20 protective services or child welfare services.

21 (b) The agency must be willing to commit to the following:

22 (i) Involvement in the program for the duration of the program;

23 (ii) Providing the employees who will be the domestic violence
24 victim advocates located at the department offices;

25 (iii) Agree to supervise and support the advocates placed into the
26 department offices;

27 (iv) Collaborate with the division of children and family services
28 program supervisor at each site; and

29 (v) Participate in the evaluation of the pilot program.

30 (c) The domestic violence advocate shall provide the following
31 services while colocated at the department office:

32 (i) Provide on-site education, consultation, and support to
33 division of children and family services staff to meet the needs of the
34 children and families involved in domestic violence situations on
35 subjects including, but not limited to:

36 (A) Identifying indicators of domestic violence;

37 (B) Interviewing techniques that do not increase the risk of danger
38 to the adult victim of domestic violence or the child;

1 (C) Identifying protective behaviors that may reduce the risk of
2 harm to the adult victim or the child;

3 (D) Determining risks posed by an alleged domestic violence
4 perpetrator to the adult victim or the child; and

5 (E) How to refer victims to a domestic violence advocate;

6 (ii) Provide advocacy services to facilitate linkage to appropriate
7 community supports for families receiving services from division of
8 children and family services offices;

9 (iii) Participating in child protective services unit meetings,
10 case reviews, or child protection team meetings, for families with
11 identified domestic violence concerns; and

12 (iv)(A) Provide general information to department workers regarding
13 domestic violence issues such as battering tactics, resources, and
14 safety planning development. It is not the role of the advocate to
15 provide information or training to department workers on specialized
16 areas of child welfare practice such as risk assessments.

17 (B) Further, the domestic violence advocate shall not provide case
18 consultation services to any family to whom they are providing direct
19 advocacy. The domestic violence advocate may not provide direct
20 advocacy services to any family on whose case they have provided
21 consultation.

22 (6)(a) The department shall select pilot program sites in which the
23 supervisors who will work with the pilot program in the division of
24 children and family services offices have formal training and
25 experience working with families affected by domestic violence and
26 child maltreatment and who have participated in best practices work
27 groups for domestic violence issues.

28 (b) The supervisors' duties shall include the following:

29 (i) Ensuring that the domestic violence advocates have the support
30 necessary to implement advocate-specific portions of the program;

31 (ii) Ensuring that children and family services social workers
32 receive ongoing training regarding domestic violence;

33 (iii) Ensuring appropriate case investigation, documentation, and
34 planning in cases involving domestic violence that accurately hold
35 domestic violence perpetrators responsible for the adverse impacts of
36 their behavior on the children, increases children's and victim's
37 safety, identifies and builds on adult domestic violence victim's
38 strengths, and holds abusers accountable;

1 (iv) Convening case staffings which include the domestic violence
2 advocates; and

3 (v) Providing consultation to the caseworkers regarding appropriate
4 interventions for the adult victim, the child, and the alleged domestic
5 violence perpetrator.

6 (7) Provision of services by domestic violence advocates under this
7 section does not waive or diminish the confidential or privileged
8 nature of communications between a victim of domestic violence and
9 advocate pursuant to RCW 5.60.060, 70.123.075, or 70.123.076.

10 (8) The Washington state institute for public policy shall evaluate
11 the pilot program to determine the outcomes of the program.

12 (a) Beginning October 2008, the institute shall conduct a
13 preprogram assessment. The preprogram assessment shall include a
14 comparison of the program sites to two additional division of children
15 and family services offices selected as comparison sites. The
16 comparison sites shall not have a domestic violence advocate colocated
17 at those sites.

18 (b) Following the preprogram assessment, the institute shall
19 conduct an evaluation of the pilot program, which includes a comparison
20 of the program and nonprogram sites, to determine the following
21 outcomes:

22 (i) Changes to the rate of being referred back to child protective
23 services intake for domestic violence related concerns;

24 (ii) Whether there are documented safety assessments that identify
25 domestic violence safety risk factors for the children and the adult
26 victim of domestic violence;

27 (iii) Whether there are documented service plans with strategies
28 that address and mitigate identified domestic violence safety risks;

29 (iv) Whether there is an increase in the ability of the adult
30 victims of domestic violence to identify safety risks and adverse
31 impacts of domestic violence on the children;

32 (v) Whether there is an increase in the adult domestic violence
33 victim's access to resources available to them within the community to
34 increase the safety and security for themselves and the children;

35 (vi) Whether there is an increase in the ability of the perpetrator
36 of domestic violence to identify and understand the adverse impact of
37 the abusive and coercive domestic violence behaviors on their children;

1 (vii) Changes to the rate of children of adult domestic violence
2 victims placed into protective custody in the program offices compared
3 to the comparison sites at the end of the three-year pilot program
4 period;

5 (viii) Whether there is an increase in the knowledge of division of
6 children and family services caseworkers regarding response to domestic
7 violence in the child protective services caseload;

8 (ix) Whether the capacity of the social worker to accurately
9 identify domestic violence perpetrators as responsible for the negative
10 consequences of domestic violence increases and is reflected through
11 case plans, who is the target of investigations, and against whom
12 findings are made; and

13 (x) Whether the focus on the perpetrator will cause division of
14 children and family services social workers to develop service plans
15 and strategies for the perpetrator with the aim of reducing child
16 neglect or abuse risks caused by the perpetrator's domestic violence
17 behaviors.

18 (c)(i) The institute shall use the results of the evaluation to
19 identify the effectiveness of the program including effectiveness of
20 training, consultation, and advocacy services, changes in social worker
21 practices, improvements in services to families, barriers to
22 implementing program services, and service gaps for families affected
23 by domestic violence.

24 (ii) The evaluation shall include recommendations to the department
25 for improving domestic violence responses in other division of children
26 and family services community offices of Washington state.

27 (d) The institute shall report the findings of the program to the
28 appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2011.

29 (9) This section expires January 1, 2012.

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